

The Write News

California Writers Club~Mount Diablo Branch

A Monthly Newsletter

January 2010

The California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

Features

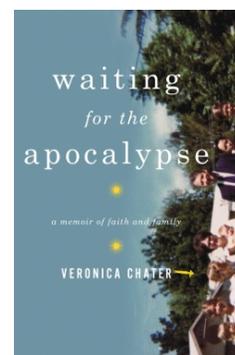
Veronica Chater

“Writing Your Own Story”

January 9, 2010



All writers feel called to tell their own life story. Some do it in book-length memoirs; others in shorter nonfiction formats—personal essays, ongoing blog entries, journaling. Many short story writers and novelists admit to probing the meaning of their lives through their fiction. This month, memoirist Veronica Chater will share tips on how to write our personal stories. In her recently published *Waiting for the Apocalypse: A Memoir of Faith and Family* (W.W.



Norton & Company), she tells the story of her early life as one of eleven children.

She calls it “the story that was in the shadowy background of every essay, short story, and radio piece I’ve ever done—the one that time would not let me forget.” Since we are all telling our own stories, in one form or another, we are fortunate to have an opportunity to learn from one of the best in this genre.

Please join us for this informative session to be held at Zio Fraedo's Restaurant.

All are welcome to come, learn, and network with local writers. The CWC, Mount Diablo Branch web address is www.mtdiablowriters.org.

January Meeting Details

Date & Time: Saturday, January 9, 2010, from noon to 2:30 p.m.

Sign-in begins at 11:30.

Location: Zio Fraedo's Restaurant at 611 Gregory Lane (near the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Gregory Lane in Pleasant Hill). Parking is available both in front and behind the restaurant. The restaurant's phone number is (925) 933-9091.

Cost: \$20 for CWC members, \$25 for non-members

Menu: Zio Fraedo's luncheon buffet.

Reservations: Reservations are required and must be received no later than noon on Wednesday, January 6. To make a reservation, contact Jean Georgakopoulos, via e-mail at, jeaniepops@comcast.net, or by phone at (925) 934-5677. Expect confirmation only if you e-mail your reservation.



In accordance with our contractual agreement with Zio Fraedo's Restaurant, the club is charged for every reservation confirmed on the day before the meeting. If you are not able to either attend this meeting or cancel your reservation prior to noon on Friday, December 11, you will be asked to remit a \$20 "no-show" payment.

~ *Coming Attractions* ~ *Upcoming Speakers for 2009-2010*

February 13: Suzanne Woods Fisher ~ Starting Small

March 13: Nik C. Colyer, Grit-Lit Novelist, Poet, author of the Biker Bob series

April 10: Writing Workshop ~ Martha Engber

May 15: Young Writers Banquet ~ Speaker to be announced

June 12: Sophie Littlefield, Author

President's Message

By David George



Happy New Year to everyone! (I am allowed one and only one exclamation point per article.) 2010 I am sure will present its challenges but I am confident we will all have opportunities to accomplish our personal goals. Will you take advantage of your opportunities this year? That is my personal goal, and I hope you share that goal with me.

I am excited about a new community outreach initiative that the Board of Directors has embraced. As part of my renewed emphasis on reaching out to our community, we have assigned member liaisons to each local bookstore in central Contra Costa county. With their blessing, each bookstore will be featured in our newsletters and on our web site. Their initiatives and events will be publicized, but without any financial remuneration. In return, we will ask the bookstores who agree to cooperate with us to increase their promotion of our local author/member books.

Not all bookstores will agree to go along, and the stores who agree will most likely have varying degrees of cooperativeness. But the goal is to establish a cooperative promotional link between our branch and community bookstores. This initiative, we hope will benefit both the stores and our authors with increased visibility and prosperity in coming years. After all, we share a common interest, don't we?

We will keep the membership abreast of progress toward our goal. The program is just beginning to be rolled out, so be patient. Hopefully, by the end of our Club year (June) we will have a solid cooperative relationship with a number of local bookstores, and demonstrable benefits to report.

CWC Centennial



On the left is the newly approved colorized, stylized version of the California Writers Club Centennial logo. On the right is a photograph of the Life Member combination of pin and "rocker tab." The pin is available for purchase at our monthly meetings. The rocker tab is available for Active members who pay the Life membership fee of \$599. Those members will receive both items as a gift.



Sales and Salutes

Donna Gholson Cook has a new book titled *Fritz and Annie Lippe Family-German Cotton Farmers in Early 1900s Texas*. More information about the book is available at Donna's website, www.gholson-cook.com.

Members – Would You Like To Be Saluted?

We would like to salute you in *The Write News*. Please let newsletter Editor Catherine Accardi know if you have been published recently. Your name and writing achievement will be highlighted in the "Sales and Salutes" section of the newsletter. Send along a photograph of yourself and we shall include it as well. You may contact Catherine via e-mail at caacat@comcast.net.

Tip Bucket



As reported in the December 2008 edition of *The Write News*, the Back Fence has a new feature called the Tip Bucket. Future editions of *The Write News* will feature excerpts from the Tip Bucket. Below is the tip for January.

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY — YOUR PUBLICIST

A traditional publisher will assign you a publicist. Most of the time, staff publicists don't do much more than make sure your galleys get to the major review markets on time. What you can do:

- Offer to obtain blurbs for your book cover. Often publishers prefer to do this on their own, unless you are dear friends with Stephen King, Nora Roberts, or someone of similar repute.
- Your publicist will send galleys (also called ARCs, for Advanced Reader Copy) to reviewers. These are typeset, but uncorrected, proof pages, and are sent according to the timeframe required by the reviewing media. Ask your publicist for a list of where your galleys have been sent. Suggest other venues for your particular book, such as a niche magazine or website, or local media, where galleys can also be sent.
- Keep the publicist advised on your tours and other promotional activities. Don't be surprised if they don't care. This is generally an entry level job, with great turnover.

Many authors hire their own publicists. If you want to maximize your chances for newspaper and A/V media notice, this is the way to go. However, do a lot of research via word of mouth and professional organizations before you sign a contract with a publicist. Know what they are promising you.

For the complete text of this, and other helpful tips, check out the Tip Bucket at the Back Fence. Members of The Back Fence can visit this site at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/CWCBackFence/>. Click on "Files" at the left of your screen. Topics of interest to writers are arranged in order as you work your way through the publishing process. Do you have any tips to share under the main topics? Do you have another topic you feel needs to be addressed? Members who want to add their tips can open a folder and easily add a file. If you haven't yet joined the Back Fence, go to the link above and follow the simple sign-up process.

Member Profile

By Jody Denison



Profile: Pat Haas

Pat Haas is a founding member of our chapter and recently returned to "active duty" (as it were). Many talented writers are by their very nature artistic and thereby capable of creating in several media. This is Pat. Her profile reflects this talent and her humor. I decided to leave it alone and let her speak for herself. ~ Jody

I started writing in my thirties after my two boys didn't need me as much. I was reading philosophy books and one of them said, "What you wanted to be at twelve was what you were meant to do." I wanted to be a reporter, so I started at DVC College. My first magazine articles sold by way of a query. It was an assignment in my first Magazine Writer Class. Naturally, I thought this was easy.

The first non-fiction idea query brought a book offer. The book, "The Best Dog is a Trained Dog," written with a dog trainer is still for sale on the Internet. I have seen it as low as 50cents and as high as \$23. The \$23 one had laminated pages. I have a sad tale of that book that I won't tell here.

I have written magazine pieces, a monthly fashion column for Leshar's Antioch Ledger, and various newspaper pieces. I worked freelance only, except for three years I wrote, edited, and sold ads for the four page 450 Sutter Medical Building's newsletter. I got the job through the SF State job board. I went to SF State because I wanted to write fiction and thought I needed some education in fine writing. I learned about classic novels, and poetry. I wrote one screenplay for a class that was entered in a writer's contest. The manuscripts had to be judged before they were admitted. I have never sold any fiction I have written. Although by the time I quit writing I had five novels finished.

After I quit CWC, I joined the California Outdoor Writers Group. The group is mostly professional sports writers. My angle was easy--outdoor adventure for Seniors. I got to go on junkets from white water rafting to listening to talks about outdoor problems. I sold my work to local papers. I quit writing entirely for nearly twenty years because of family trouble. When I write fiction, I lose myself and can't concentrate on my own life. The family trouble of death, dependency, and illness needed total concentration. I spent my creative time doing fiber art. I sold wearable art, won money with mixed media fiber art, had a quilt go to Lyon, France and an accessory and a garment travel the United State with fabric companies.

I was born in Pennsylvania, raised in Illinois and got to Antioch in time to go to high school. I have been here ever since. I felt like I had come home when I got here. I have been married for 51 & 1/2 years with two sons, two daughters-in-law, two grandsons, and one grand horse.

I got back to writing early in the new century. I threw away a three book series that couldn't be updated because it dealt with Las Vegas, photography and cocaine, all three of which changed too much in the intervening years to rework. I kept three books, one modern and two westerns. I transferred them from a floppy in Word Perfect to a CD in Microsoft Word. To do that I had to take out codes and reformat. While I was doing that I caught the writer's flu. Since the bug hit I have rewritten my modern one, then added two more about the same character. I think I have finally made the poor guy's life better and now I have to find a new character. I am going to look into self-publishing and electronic publishing. I really would like to have readers.

Contests

The Central Coast Writers Club Spring 2010 Writing Contest deadline is coming up on January 15. The contest is open to those as yet unpublished. Two winners will receive \$500 each and will be published in the 2010 *Homestead Review*. For detailed contest information go to www.centralcoastwriters.org, or e-mail ccw-contests@ccw.net.

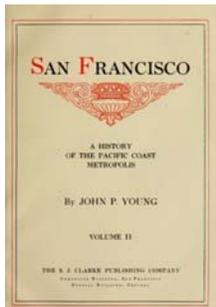
The 20th Annual Midwest Book Awards has issued a call for entries to publishers and authors. Deadline for receipt of books and entry fees is January 29, 2010. The awards recognize creativity in content and execution, overall book quality, and the book's unique contribution to its subject area. For more information, including eligibility rules, go to www.mipa.org/uploads/2009EntryCall.pdf.

Conference

The Northern California Publishers and Authors Conference will take place on April 24, 2010, at the Red Lion Inn in Sacramento. This daylong conference is an opportunity for emerging and established authors and publishers to hear from experts. For forms and more information, visit www.norcalpa.org, or contact Rosa Umbach at (916) 342-7556 or (916) 722-6897.

From the Editor's Desk

By Catherine Accardi



If you read my pieces regularly, you may have noticed I could care less about writing articles about point of view, grammar, or sentence structure. I may "need" such instruction and can easily find same in any library. I prefer to explore California's authors, publications, literary repositories, and the like. So, here we go again, this time its all about John P. Young. In 1912, Mr. Young's book, *A History of the Pacific Coast Metropolis*, was published. His chapter titled "Journalism and Literature" is quoted, in part, below:

"Journalism and literature were so closely allied in the 1850s it is impossible to discuss them apart. Editors were more interested in "belle letters" than news gathering." He goes on to write: "In her, *The Story of the File: A Review of California Writers and Literature*, Ella Sterling Cummins (pictured at right) describes the period 1852-1858 as the Golden Era School of Literature. In the periodical, *Golden Era*, well represented were Francis Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Joaquin Miller, Thomas Starr King, Charles Warren Stoddard. Also a galaxy of females, Myrtle Miller, Ada Isaacs Menken, Ina Coolbrith, Alice Kingsbury."



Those of you tempted to correct Mr. Young's grammar and spelling, tsk, tsk. For those of you who enjoy "his kind of thing," you might want to check the Cambridge History of English and American Literature website at www.bartleby.com/cambridge/chapterindex.html.

The Prelude of Mrs. Cummins book reads: "The complete tale of the writers of California has not yet been told, and, possibility never will be." She wrote this in her 1893 *The Story of the File*. I will continue this thread in the February edition of **From the Editor's Desk**.

Annual Young Writers Contest

**Sponsored by
The California Writers Club, Mount Diablo Branch**

The Mount Diablo Branch of the California Writers Club invites you to support the young writers of today by honoring the great California writers of the past. Please consider joining one of the following donor clubs. Your gift will be acknowledged in the Young Writers Contest program and in the Mount Diablo CWC newsletter. In addition, all donations are tax-deductible. Here are the most recent donors to the Young Writers Contest:

**Joanne Brown
Betty Iverson
Christine Sunderland
Dick Tenney**

This annual Young Writers Contest for middle school students of Contra Costa County awards cash prizes for excellence in short story, poetry, and essay/personal narrative categories. Contest submissions are free and must be received on or before April 14, 2010. Winners are notified in May and presented with their awards at an awards luncheon on Saturday, May 15, 2010, at a local restaurant. All expenses of the program are supported by individual donations and grants. Please join us in this unique program for encouraging our youth toward creative writing.

- ~ **The Jack London Founder's Circle - \$500**
- ~ **The John Steinbeck Society - \$250 - \$499**
- ~ **The John Muir Member Club - \$150 - \$249**
- ~ **The Ina Coolbrith Laureate Club - \$100 - \$149**
- ~ **The Mary Austin Writers Club - \$50 - \$99**
- ~ **The Helen Hunt Jackson Group - \$25 - \$49**
- ~ **The Gertrude Atherton Guild - \$10 - \$24**

Please list my membership in the following donor club: _____

Name _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ (checks or cash only, please)

Acknowledge my gift in honor of/in memory of _____

Make your check payable to: *CWC-Mt. Diablo Branch*

Mail to: CWC Mt. Diablo Branch, Attention: Young Writers Contest, P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA 94507.

Please consider joining a Donor Club in support of our Annual Young Writers Contest. Your gift furthers our mission to provide support and encouragement not only to our adult writers, but also to identify and reward excellence among Contra Costa County middle school students. Your gift enables our club to continue and to expand our outreach to young writers. You can designate a gift in honor of or in memory of a friend or loved one. Your gift is fully tax deductible. Thank you!

Young Writers Contest Guidelines & Submission Forms



California Writers Club

Mount Diablo Branch, Contra Costa County

YOUNG WRITERS CONTEST

Honoring a New Generation of California Writers

See <http://mtdiablowriters.org/> for writer details

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Home Address _____

Street City Zip

Home Phone _____ E-mail Address _____

School _____ Grade _____

First and Last Name of your English (and Humanities) Teacher _____

Manuscript Title _____

MANUSCRIPT CATEGORIES (please check one):

_____ Short Story (up to 5 pages typed, double-spaced)

_____ Poem (up to 30 lines, need not be double-spaced)

_____ Personal Narrative/Essay (up to 3 pages, typed, double-spaced)

Mail submissions to: CWC-Young Writers Contest, P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA 94507

DON'T MISS OUT: Only entries that follow the guidelines EXACTLY will be considered!

CONTEST GUIDELINES:

1. Contest open to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students who live in or attend school in Contra Costa County.

2. Submit 2 copies of your manuscript. Do not include artwork or a cover. Your manuscript must be typed or computer generated at 12 point, double-spaced. No staples. Paper clips only.

3. Put your name in the upper left-hand corner of each page. Number each page. Put manuscript title on the first page.

4. Multiple entries are welcome. Each entry must be accompanied by a separate application form (above) or 3x5 card noting: name; home address; home phone; school; grade; e-mail address; teacher; manuscript title; and category.

5. Deadline for submission is 4/12/10. Winners will be announced when judging is complete.

6. INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS BY STUDENTS PREFERRED. TEACHERS: PLEASE ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO SUBMIT THEIR STORIES AND POEMS THEMSELVES.

TEACHERS: We are striving to encourage individual creativity and expression. Do not send entire class assignments. Teachers of winning students will be invited to attend the May 15 banquet.

***** *Prize information can be found on the next page.* *****

Young Writers Contest

PRIZES: Winning short stories and poems from each grade level will receive \$100 for first prize, \$50 for second prize and \$25 for third prize. The Betty Tenney Essay Award of \$100 will be given to the best personal narrative/essay in each grade. Second and third place prizes may be awarded in this category at the judges' discretion. Prizes will be presented to winners on May 15, 2010, at a lunch banquet. A published author will speak. Parents are welcome.

Workshop Sign up Form

**What: Young Writers Workshop
An Interactive Writing Morning**

Who: Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Grade Students

When: Saturday, January 30, 2010, 9:00-Noon OR: Saturday, February 6, 2010, 9:00-Noon
Where: Concord Public Library Where: Ygnacio Valley Public Library
2900 Salvio Street, Concord 2661 Oak Grove Road, Walnut Creek
Cost: FREE! COST: FREE!

- * Personal Narrative Vs. Short Story
- * How to Write a Page-Turning, Exciting, Fabulously Fantastic Account about YOUR LIFE and/or a suspenseful, imaginative fictional short story.
- * Discover writing tips & secrets from the pros from two authors who love writing! You'll also get a chance to ask questions about the publishing world, play a writing game, and meet other writers your age.
- * Led by children's authors Sarah Wilson and Elizabeth Koehler-Pentacoff
Visit them at www.sarahwilsonbooks.com and www.lizbooks.com
- * Bring pen and paper and get ready to WRITE!
- * Attendees will be eligible to enter a drawing for a free book by the authors.
Visit www.mtdiablownriters.org

California Writers Club Mount Diablo Branch Young Writers Workshop 2010 Sign up Form

PLEASE PRINT

Check one. _____ January 30 - Concord _____ February 6 - Ygnacio Valley

Name _____

Home Address _____
House/Apt. Number Street City Zip

Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

School _____ Grade _____

Teacher's First & Last Name _____

Workshop space is limited. Your reservation will be acknowledged by e-mail. E-mail the above application form to: YoungWriters@mtdiablownriters.org, or postal mail to: CWC-Young Writers Workshop, P.O. Box 606, Alamo, CA 94507

California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch

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California Writers Club ~ Mount Diablo Branch
Post Office Box 606, Alamo, CA 94507



Sail On!